

National Heritage Team of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Oral History Program
Subject/USFW Retiree: Butterbaugh, Galen
Date: July 15, 2006
Interviewed by: John Cornely

John Cornely:

Hello, this John Cornely, I am here with Galen Butterbaugh today, it's the 16th of July in 2006. We are in the beautiful city of Spokane, Washington, and we are going to do an oral history interview with Galen today as part of our Fish and Wildlife Service Heritage Program, oral history project.

Galen Butterbaugh:

I was born in Walnut Grove, Minnesota on April 11, 1934. Walnut Grove is a small town in southwestern Minnesota, an agricultural community, and it's in the prairie pothole country, or it was, they are long gone now, but it was at that point in time. My whole early career, being interested in hunting and fishing, was kind of formed being in that environment where there were a lot of ducks and a lot of fish, and I spent most of my childhood hunting and fishing when I could. My parents; my dad's name was Lauren and my mother's name was Helen, and they both had eighth grade educations and went to a country school. Their parents, my grandparents, lived just half a mile from each other on the farm, and most of my relatives were farmers, and I was raised pretty much on farms when I was a kid until my dad finally, when I got up to age 10 or 12, moved us into town and so I lived in a small town. Walnut Grove was a community of about 800 people, its claim to fame, which came after I left, was that Laura Ingalls Wilder's book series on Little House on The Prairie, one of her books, On the Banks Plum Creek, was written when she lived, or they lived just three or four miles north of town. And I can remember the dugout when I was a kid, I didn't even know what it meant at that time, nobody paid any attention to it, but I knew where it was at. So that was kind of an interesting thing. But the town has probably not changed over a hundred in the last 50 or 60 years, it's still a small community and getting smaller.

I had a lot of jobs when I was a kid from paper routes to working as a carpenter. My hobbies were hunting and fishing as much as I could and afford, and spending time in the woods. I just loved to be anyplace where there were trees, and in that county most of it is farmland, and so I was attracted to any of the river areas or lakes or anything, and I can remember just loving to get into that country because I really wasn't too much taken by corn and soybean country. Anyway, I graduated; I spent my high school or whole school career in Walnut Grove and went through the 12 grades. There were 28 kids in my graduating class, and 12 of us started together, so there were 12 of the 28 kids in my class that went through school together.

I graduated in 1952, and at that time I had already had a couple of summers working for a contractor and had a pretty good job as a carpenter, and he was willing to train me as a bricklayer, which would have been an excellent career, but it was kind of seasonal, Minnesota in the winter time there's not much construction because it is so cold. And I

was determined that I was at some point going to do something related to fish and wildlife.

And so when I graduated from high school, that fall and winter when we got laid off, I wrote a letter to the State Department of Fish and Game, and just said, "I would take any job that you have at any salary, if you would hire me with a high school education." And my dad said, "You'll never hear from them." About two months later I got a letter back from them and it said, "We have a job for you as a laborer 2 in Lanesboro, Minnesota," which was in the southeastern part of the state, "at a fish hatchery, and on the 1st of April if you are available you can start down there." And I jumped at the chance. I think it paid like \$200 a month if I'm not mistaken, that is roughly what it was. And so on the 1st of April I headed for Lanesboro, Minnesota. I didn't have a car but I'd made arrangements until I could get a little more money, because my folks didn't have a lot of money, so that I could work down there and eventually buy a car after a couple of three weeks.

The only problem was that the Korea War was on about that time, and as soon as I graduated from high school I got a draft notice and had to take my physical. So by the time I started to work for the state of Minnesota, I'd only worked there I think it was some time in May, and I got my draft notice. Most of my buddies and the folks that I went to high school with and the year before that had been drafted and ended up in combat engineers, and a lot of them ended up in Korea and got shot up. None of them got killed but a few of them got wounded, and I just really didn't care for that, so I went to see some recruiters and I ended up enlisting in the Army so I could get some training. I enlisted in the Army Security Agency, which was kind of a security branch of the Signal Corp, and they did a lot of monitoring of foreign military installations and things, and I spent three years and never left the states. I went to school for six months in Georgia after basic training as a high speed radio operator, I got transferred to New England and spent two and a half wonderful years up there, I met my wife there, and I had a great time up there. When I was in basic training, I went into the Army on the 1st of July in 1953, the Korea War ended in August, and so the whole thing ended by then.

Anyway it worked out, and because of my Army training I could afford to go to college, and so I went to college under the GI Bill and went to the University of Minnesota. There was no question in my mind that I wanted a degree in fish and wildlife management, at that is exactly what I did, and I got my degree. There was a regional office for the Fish and Wildlife Service there in the Twin Cities, and we had a number of people come down to talk us from the regional office, different folks that were there at our fish and wildlife club, and so I knew a few of these folks. In the beginning of my senior year, I was trying to focus in on who I wanted to work for, and the State of Minnesota had a big expansion in their game warden program, and they had a test that about 1200 people took, or something like that, and I ended up number 27 in the state at that time, but they didn't have any jobs, and they were just kind of picking them off this list. And so at the time I graduated, if Minnesota had a job, I probably would have stayed as a game warden, but they didn't have any. But I had spent some time over at the regional office, and compared to the state agencies that I talked to, the training and the

retirement system and everything that the federal government had, to me, was much better, and so I ended up signing up with the Fish and Wildlife Service I think by the 1st of May the year I graduated, or before I graduated I had signed up already with the Fish and Wildlife Service to start on July 1 at a fish hatchery in Manchester, Iowa, it was a trout hatchery.

And so on July 1, 1960, I started with the Fish and Wildlife Service and from there, went to about a half a dozen different fish hatcheries. At that time, the Fish and Wildlife Service had a lot of money. Congress just had all kinds of money, and building fish hatcheries was a very popular thing and a lot of money for expanding fish hatcheries, and so there were all kinds of training programs. I got six months of training at a warm water facility in Alabama during that first six years, and a bunch of other training. It was an excellent place to be.

One of the interesting things at that time was that in order to raise trout at that time, you had to feed them meat, raw meat, during most of their life cycle, because if you tried to raise them entirely on dry pellets, which were available, their eggs were no good, they were not viable. And so every trout hatchery had a huge freezing room and a grinding room, which was like great big commercial grinders, and you would spend two or three days a week grinding meat for the fish, and this was condemned beef liver, was the food that they bought, and it came with either green or black dye all through it, and it came in, I can't remember if it was 50, it seemed like 80 pound boxes frozen, but I think it was 50. And so you'd get a whole big truckload of that, and it would be 30,000 or 40,000 pounds that would come in at a time that you would put into the freezer, and you'd have to thaw that out, and some of it was spleen, condemned spleen, but this was all condemned stuff. You would have to cut off the tumors and all the other gross stuff that was on it, and skin them, take the connective tissue off of the liver and then grind it and grind it and grind it for the little fish, and put salt with it and you could add some other ingredients and stuff, but you ended up feeding with ricers and all kinds of things in order to keep the fish healthy.

Well, during that time, during those five years, Harvey Willoughby, who was a hatchery manager at that time in Spearfish, South Dakota, was doing experiments on diets that you could raise trout on pellets, so you didn't have to feed them meat. And in about 1963 or 1964, he succeeded in coming up with a diet that would do just that. I can't remember what the one, there was about two ingredients that were missing in most of the commercial diets available, and one was enough protein, and it had to be fish protein of some kind, halibut or something from herring or whitefish, some kind of protein, and I think the other was folic acid if I'm not mistaken, I can't remember for sure. But anyway, he came up with a pellet that you could feed trout from the time they hatched or until they became sexually mature, and you would have viable eggs. From that point on, that was the start of the commercial trout culture industry in The United States. Before that time, when I first started, I don't know of any, because most of them couldn't afford the labor, it was so labor intensive that they really couldn't afford it in the private industry. But starting after that, it slowly started until by 1970, there were a large number of commercial trout hatcheries around the country. And from that it progressed over into

the catfish industry. The whole thing has taken off since then because a lot of the diet requirements were the same for catfish and the technology, so it was a major. And it all started mainly because of Harvey Willoughby and the Fish and Wildlife Service, who eventually was the regional director there in Denver.

So it was an interesting time, a lot of money, and I moved around to different hatcheries, and we had a lot of money to build. I remember when I moved to Portland, and that was in 1968, I think we had 40 million dollars just for construction. Back in those days that was a lot of money, and we had something like 20 or 30 hatcheries being rebuilt or new construction all at that time. Back in the '60s, it was a good time to be working for the Fish and Wildlife Service because there was a lot of money, refuges were expanding, at that time they were authorizing a lot of refuges and they were building new ones, so there were a lot of interesting things going on relating to fish hatcheries.

From that point on, I guess I covered my military service, my wife I met while I was in the Army in Massachusetts, and she gladly followed me around wherever I went and had no problems with that. There were a few moves that both of us were not too happy about, but it went pretty well. We have one daughter, Sandra, and she is 40 years old, so that would be 1965 that she was born when we were in Michigan.

The different hatcheries that we lived at, some of them raised trout, I worked warm water hatcheries, lake trout hatcheries in Michigan, and so there were all different kinds of fish cultures. So I had a pretty background in fish culture by the time I had been in the service seven or eight years. I went to Washington D.C. to the Environmental Training School for six months back in 1967. And then I applied for a job in Portland, Oregon in May of 1967, we moved out there in the regional office and fish hatcheries, and spent about a year there. They conned me into going to Washington, D.C. and to the Division of Fish Hatcheries, which was my first mistake career-wise to get that far removed from the field and living in D.C. Actually, it was a pretty good job, I was able to do some traveling overseas and different fish cultural things, and to the Azores and different countries, and that was kind of interesting. Then we moved to Minneapolis, where I applied for a job and I was the Assistant Regional Director for Fisheries Assistance, and that was all of the fisheries assistance folks, we have five or six field stations and they took care of federal lands, some worked on refuges. We also had the Sea Lamprey Control Program at that time for the Great Lakes, which was the major part of the job there and which was really interesting. We spent about six years in Minneapolis, and my folks lived up there at that time and so we would have gladly stayed there if we could have. The mistake I made there was that in about 1975, the Fish and Wildlife Service set up a new position called associate regional director, and it was kind of training position where they would take young folks and they would put them in this job and you were in the front office and you were kind of the gopher, but you were also learning about what the front office was about at this time, and I got picked for the job there in Minneapolis and spent about a year in that job. Well, then they abolished the jobs, and so I was left without a job and not quite sure what to do and not quite sure what was going to happen. I would have been happy to stay there. Well, Harvey Nelson, who was the Associate Director for Fish and Wildlife in Washington D.C. at that time, called me up and said,

"I'd like to come out and talk with you." And so he showed up one day and said, "I've got a job for you." And I kind of knew what was coming because Howard Larsen, who had been picked for the regional director, who was in the job, had been picked for the regional director in Boston, and Harvey was looking for somebody to go in and take over the Deputy Associate for Fisheries in Washington, D.C. I did not want to go but I didn't have a job and I really couldn't turn him down, it was a good job. And so in May of 1976, we moved to Washington, D.C. in that position. Jim Pulliam was the Deputy Associate Director for Wildlife, and he taught me much of the ropes of being an interior, and all of the things dealing with the department and the assistant secretary's office, and how to smoke terrible cigars. We had some wonderful times in there, and I owe a lot to Jim for what he taught me at that particular time.

During that time, there were a number of administration changes in Washington, but the big one was in about 1981, when Regan was elected and James Watt came in as Secretary and Don Hodel as the Under Secretary, and that was a traumatic experience for the Fish and Wildlife Service, actually for the Federal Government, because Regan had campaigned on stopping waste, fraud and abuse, and there were major cuts.

Jim Watt and Don Hodel both had worked for Interior previously so they knew how the Department worked and they knew where to put the pressure to get what they wanted done. And I can still remember that all of us got called in about a week after Watt showed up, and Hodel, and the Director, Dr. Eugene Hester was the acting Director at the time because all of the previous folks got kicked out of there, and they said meet us in the Secretary's Conference Room, which is a great big room with a long table. There were about eight of us sitting on one side, and after a few minutes here comes Hodel and Watt in. They sat down at the table across from us and the first thing that Jim Watt said, "Do you know that a Fish and Wildlife Service employee cannot drive down the road in the state of Wyoming without being shot at?" And there was absolute silence on our side of the table because it was absolutely not true. We had field stations in Wyoming, but Jim had been told this by some of his friends, he obviously believed everything that they told him, some of the ranchers and some of the folks there. And from that point it kind of went downhill in the conversation. He said, "I want you to know that this administration is not too pleased about some of the things that the Fish and Wildlife Service is doing, and we intend to make major changes, and if any of you cannot participate fully in implementing these changes, we will find another position for you quickly." It was bad. Actually, it did not turn out to be near that bad over the next year or two, but that's the way it started out. And he actually did that to most of the other bureaus too, it wasn't only the Fish and Wildlife Service. But I think he thought the Fish and Wildlife Service was probably worse because of some of the things that he had heard from folks in Wyoming.

And I can still remember about two weeks later Harvey gets a call, and the Secretary wanted to see somebody in the Fish and Wildlife Service concerning a field station called Ranch A in Wyoming, which is just across the border in Wyoming in the Black Hills from South Dakota, a beautiful facility, a big ranch-type facility and a spring that was out of this world for raising fish, and the Secretary wanted to see somebody. Well I was

handling the fishery things, so I figured this is it, here's my baptism of fire going up, and they just sent me alone, I'm the only one that went up there. And we'd already heard that the Secretary wanted nothing to do with the large conference room or the large office that he had, and it was a huge office and he would not use it, and so I didn't even know where he was at up there, but I go upstairs and go into the outer office to his secretary and told him who it was. They put me in a small room, it couldn't have been more than 20-ft x 20-ft, and I sat down in a chair and there was just a desk, and the only thing I noticed was I looked up on the wall and there was the scroungiest, mangiest looking fox mounted on this wall up there. I can't imagine where it came from because it had been moth eaten and one of the eyes was kind of canted and the nose was half broken off, and there was this fox up there, and it was the Secretary's office, and I never did find out if he brought that with him or where that came from. But anyway, he walked into the office, and I had all kinds of notes and everything, because the region wanted to keep that field station and we figured sure as the world that he was going to give it away. And that's the way he started the conversation, he said, "Some of my friends in Wyoming are interested in Ranch A, and we understand you don't want it anymore." Well, I said, "No sir, we have a lot of things we want to do with Ranch A, it has great potential as a field station." And I started down through my list of things and I got through about five or six of them, and he said, "Oh, you want to keep it?" And I said, "Yes sir." And he said, "Okay, keep it." That was it! So I wasn't in there more than five minutes, and he was just as kind as could be about it and that was it. I don't think he really cared one way or the other, but he had been told by folks that we really didn't want the station.

The next thing that showed up was the Assistant Secretary, which was Ray Arnett, and Ray came in, and he was a petroleum engineer, had worked in Alaska, a great hunter, very active in the National Rifle Association, a neat guy. He had the raunchiest mouth in anybody that I have ever met, but colorful, he was so colorful. Actually, he was a pretty good friend of the Service when it came right down to it. Well, soon after he got there, he wanted to bring in Bob Jantzen, who was the director in Arizona, and he had worked with Bob when he was the commissioner in California, or maybe director, I can't remember which job that Ray Arnett had. But anyway, the White House had other plans, they had a gentleman, he was veterinarian from southern California, I can't even think of his name now, who had written a book titled, "The Herbaceous Plants of Baja, California." It was kind of his claim to fame other than being a vet. Well, so the White House brought this guy in and Ray Arnett brought in Jantzen. So we had two candidates for the Director of the Fish and Wildlife Service in the Department at the same time, and we were told by the Department that in no uncertain terms, do not let those two get together and be in the same place at the same time. Both of them had to be briefed on what the Fish and Wildlife Service was doing, so we each had to go in and sit down and try to explain to them because one or the other was going to end up on the Hill after going through confirmation hearings. And so we had about two weeks where they were both there, and it was terrifying in part because we were worried that they were going to see each other and stuff, but it just sort of worked out that we had the two of them there to talk to. Well then finally, the International put pressure on the Department and the White House that they wanted no part of this veterinarian because he didn't meet the basic qualifications in the Fish and Wildlife Act that says that the Director of the Fish and

Wildlife Service must have the training and experience in the Fish and Wildlife field. They finally put enough pressure politically on the White House to back him down. But the White House never forgave Ray Arnett for doing that; they thought that Ray had done that. And so he disappeared and Bob Jantzen became our director, and a good one. But Ray, I remember, I had a lot of doings with Ray on the fishery side of things because he was one of the commissioners on the Great Lakes Fishery Commission and we went to a lot of meetings together, and he actually showed me a letter that he got from the White House reprimanding him for what they thought he had done. He thought it was funny and he didn't care that much about anything. He had apparently raised so much money for Regan that there was nobody at the White House that dared touch him, and so he just poo-pooed the whole thing. But anyway, he showed me this letter once that he received. Anyway, those were interesting times back then, and I enjoyed it with Harvey and Jim and other folks.

We lived in our first eight years in the service and I'll name the stations that we were at; we were in Manchester, Iowa and Crawford, Nebraska, and Spearfish, South Dakota, and Yankton, South Dakota, back to Crawford, Nebraska as manager, Marion, Alabama for the in-service training school, and then I went Auburn University compliments of the government to graduate school, then I went to Jordan River, Michigan, which was a lake trout station, I went to Washington, D.C. in the Environmental Training Program, back to Jordan River, and then ended up in Portland, Oregon finally. All of that in about seven or eight years, it was an interesting first few years in our career. And then from Washington, D.C., I thought that I would end up there maybe forever, we were there for six years, and one day Bob Jantzen called and said, "Come on up, we need to talk to you." And he said, "Are you interested in going to Denver as regional director?" And at that time they already had a new regional director who came out of the state of Colorado, and I kind of figured that that job was gone forever. Well, it turns out that didn't work out, and they moved that individual to Washington, D.C. and they had an opening, and I was there within two weeks. It took me that long to get out there, it took us a little longer to move, but I was so happy to get there. Denver was one of the two regions probably that I would have preferred. Well, there were two or three that I wouldn't have minded going to, but that one was certainly high in my list. So we spent ten years there as regional director and enjoyed most of it, although some of the things that we got into were really controversial and politically very sensitive.

As soon as I walked in the door, we had two issues to deal with that were the tough ones and one of the reasons that the previous regional director was moved on. One was Garrison Diversion Project in North Dakota, which was having difficulties getting funded and there was a lot of environmental issues relating to that, (unclear) movement of water into Canada and a whole bunch of other issues. There was a committee that had been set up that included the regional director plus folks from North Dakota, and we were supposed to work out and get this whole thing working up there, and we eventually did. I don't know that anybody was happy, but we eventually worked it out and I didn't get fired in the process. I got my picture taken with Secretary Watt, who came out at the time, and he thought we all did a great job. The other one was the Two Forks Dam Project in Colorado, where the Denver Water Board wanted to dam upstream from Denver, a

stream tributary, and that also meant moving water from the west slope over to the east side and down the Platte River, and the impacts it would have on endangered species. And that was a major issue for a year or two and took a tremendous amount of time and a lot of involvement by the political folks in Washington as well as the Department. So those certainly were two issues early that I got hit with when I got out there.

And also about that time, the grizzly bear issue kind of blew up. And I can remember one of the first meetings I went to with the Forest Service and the Park Service out there was that we've got to do something about the Grizzly Bear Research Group, which really was in charge of all the grizzly bear activities, and they were starting to talk outside, I guess they were getting very active in terms of wanting more power to do things and money to do things, and it was causing problems in the Department, both in Agriculture and Interior. And so we sat down and formulated a committee, and the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee was the title of it, and we actually put that together. Really, the person that did the most of it was the Forest (Service) supervisor and some help from the Park Service. I happened to be going back to Washington, D.C. for a meeting, and Ray Arnett found out I was coming back and he called up and he said, "When you get in here come over and talk to me about grizzly bears." He said, "We've got troubles." And I knew what the issue was because it had been getting around. So I get in there and he said, "We got to reorganize that bunch out there and get them under control and get some management people involved as well as researchers." He said, "We have got to have a balance between management and research." And I happened to have a copy of this document that we had formulated, we weren't ready to present it, but Ray was going to go ahead and start putting out some kind of organization himself, so I gave him a copy of it. And he looked down through that and he said, "This is exactly what we need." He said, "Just leave that with me, I will see to it that it gets implemented." And he did, he got the Forest Service, Agriculture, Interior, and he got the governors of the states that were involved to sign off on it, and that was the formation of the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee, which was going to this day. And we had some major issues, the grizzly bear population was in pretty poor shape back about then, and now it's doing very well. So, all I can say is that bottom line, in spite of all the troubles we had, I think it was a very successful program, and I think it's still working very well.

And then later on, the issue that was almost my undoing was the Wolf Committee, and that one was almost politically impossible to come up with anything that would make anybody happy, and Congress got involved and the Secretary. I was ready to retire after that, I mean it almost did me in. That also has been reasonably successful and the wolves have been restored pretty well. Once we got things moving, it finally settled down and it's gone pretty well. In fact, here in Spokane now we have wolves within 50 miles of Spokane, which is kind of interesting, and grizzly bears. It's kind of nice to see them moving west as well as in other directions, and so that's worked very well.

While I was Associate Director for Fisheries in Washington and the Reagan Administration came in, at the time they came in I believe we had 103 fish hatcheries in the Federal System, and soon after the Reagan Administration came in, they started to look at field operations; fish hatcheries and other things that could be closed or reduced or

transferred to the states in order to save money. OMB (Office of Management and Budget) came up with criteria, and it all revolved around what were the organic acts that supported the Fish and Wildlife Service having these fish hatcheries, and in some cases it was quite weak. We used the Coordination Act, which just said that the Fish and Wildlife Service would do good things with the states. And so OMB targeted about 30 of those hatcheries, and then the Farm Pond Program in the southeast they targeted another 20 or so, and those were the ones that they wanted to close. This was kind of tough for me to deal with because some of those hatcheries I had been stationed on and knew many of these people, and I had to be kind of the lead for the Fish and Wildlife Service in proposing that these be closed. Congress stepped in on many of them and would not allow the Regan Administration to cut the budget on many of those facilities, but I think by the time I retired in 1992, that the Fish and Wildlife Service was down to about 70, between 60 and 70 fish hatcheries at that time. So they did manage in closing some, and some of them went to the states, and some of them were just closed and used for other purposes, but there was a major effort back in those days to reduce the Federal Fish Hatchery Program. As far as I know, there was no comparable thing in the refuge side because they had good organic legislation for all of the refuges and most of the other field stations, but fish hatcheries took a pretty good hit in the Regan Administration, and even after that there were efforts to reduce it. The popularity of fish hatcheries declined, they found out biologically that in many cases it was not the thing to be doing, to be stocking fish, particularly in the face of the native species or with them, because there was competition. So there were valid reasons why they should have reduced the number of fish hatcheries.

John:

Galen, what do you recall was about the peak number, the high number of fish hatcheries in the system, do you remember?

Galen Butterbaugh:

I believe it was 103 as I recall, it was 102 or 103 I think at the high point back, this would have been about the time about 1968. No, let's see, that would have been in 1976 when I went in there, that would have been about the high point, 1976 to 1978. We probably finished a couple of more because there were some under construction back then, there were some Indian hatcheries in the Pacific Northwest that were being built back then and they all came on line. By 1980, that was probably when the peak was, right around that time. From that point on, it started to go downhill pretty rapidly.

As I had mentioned earlier, I was raised in the prairie pothole country of southwestern Minnesota, and when I was a child there was not a section of land in that country that did not have a half a dozen potholes. They could all be from seasonal half acre, or smaller up to one hundred acres or more large potholes, and there were ducks everywhere, it was a major area. And they were starting to drain, I can remember when I was a kid that the technology was there for starting to build big ditches, county ditches they called them, where they were starting to drain some of these wetlands, and this progressed. After I left southwestern Minnesota and moved away and came back, I was astonished at the rate of decline of the potholes in that country, and to this day when I go back there, they've

drained all of the wetlands, unless they are large lake-sized, 200, 300, 400, 500 acres, they are all gone. A lot of my relatives are farmers. I was out to a cousin of mine's farm last year and they were actually digging. The water level in that county is only six to ten feet down in the ground, and so any time that you have a wet spring, that big heavy machinery that they use nowadays gets bogged down in the low spots, and so what they were doing was going in with laser-directed machinery using satellites where they could actually, down to the inch, they could actually, they didn't dig a trench, they actually laid the perforated pipe behind the Caterpillar that went across the field, and everything was done by computers, and they put in all of these perforated pipes and they never really disturbed the field except at the ends, when they had to connect these laterals together. And I was just absolutely amazed, and this wasn't even where there was water standing, this was just places that tended to be wet in a wet spring. It really concerned me to see all of this country disappear.

In fact, I remember one occasion back, and it must have been about 1950 because I was in high school, and that country was major corn county, and once in awhile in the fall, maybe every four or five years, we would have a major windstorm of some kind, and a lot of the corn, if it was dry, would get knocked off on the ground. And so you had all of this ear of corn and they couldn't pick it with the machines anymore, and so they let school out and they would actually have the school kids go out, and farmers would hire them, and you would actually pick up this corn by hand and put it in racks so that they could harvest their fields. And I can remember one day we were out at this farmer's place and about 2:00 in the afternoon we had just finished having a coffee break, and we looked and we could see this black cloud coming from off in the direction of some major lakes in that part of the country. It turned out to be ducks, I'm pretty sure they were mallards, they were up fairly high, and there was a cloud of ducks coming and it continued for over an hour because I remember the farmer, we had stopped at 2:00 o'clock and I remember at 3:00 o'clock when the tail-end, it was after 3:00 o'clock, and this was a huge bunch of ducks, this wasn't just little strings of them. When they go out to feed, they're in a great big crowd, and there was thousands and thousands of ducks there. Later on, in the paper, a game warden had estimated that in the lakes in that area that year that there was over a million ducks that had stopped through and were feeding in that area. I can believe that, and this was not an unusual to have just thousands and thousands of ducks there, now there's very few.

The other thing that changed was the used of herbicides; when I was a child there were pheasants everywhere, you could go out and hunt pheasants, it was no big deal to get out and get your limit of pheasants. All of the ditches had all kinds of weeds in it and the farm field edges had all kinds of weeds, there were large swales, there were some potholes left that had a lot of vegetation in it, a lot of good habitat for in the winter for pheasants, and all of that disappeared. And over the years now, when you go out there, it is a biological desert almost. All of the herbicides they use so that there are no weeds in the fields, there are no weeds in the ditches, they are almost bare. It is just astounding changes that have taken place in the way that they farm and, of course, the profits that they can make and the productivity of the farms has just increased tremendously over these years, but it's all been at the expense of the environment and the wildlife.

When I got out to Denver and became regional director, one of the things that I was really enthused about and knew very little about was getting involved in the flyway council process and all of the activities related to waterfowl. I felt that it was probably one of the most important things I could do and I had so much to learn that I spent a tremendous amount of time in the prairie pothole states, North Dakota and South Dakota primarily, to learn as much as I could because I was really interested in that and felt that that was probably one of the most important responsibilities that the Fish and Wildlife Service had, was to look out for the waterfowl populations of the country. And it all goes back to when I was a kid and what I remembered seeing and what disappeared. So I really enjoyed that part of it, and I had a lot of good help from good staff because I didn't have a background in that area. It was very important that I had to rely on my staff to help me make the right decisions.

When the North American Wildlife Plan was formulated and put together, I think all of us in the Fish and Wildlife Service could see that this was a very important opportunity and responsibility for the Service. And so when it got down to the Joint Ventures, and I was named or was Chairman of the Prairie Pothole Joint Venture, I spent all the time that I could on that because it was one of the most important things that I could, and working with our Canadian counterparts and the states and everything, that it was a very important activity, and I thoroughly enjoyed it. I had good staff and we had a good working relationship and it worked out very well, and we were going through some tough times in terms of duck habitat; the waterfowl numbers were down and things were kind of tough back in some of those years because we had the drought conditions in the prairie pothole country and a lot of habitat was being destroyed, and so this was a very important time for the Service, and I think that it worked out very well. I thoroughly enjoyed all of that and felt that it was a very important activity for regional directors to be involved.

Another Joint Venture that came along later after all of the basic ones, the first group started was the Arctic Goose Joint Venture, which actually came about as a result of concern on the part of the Canadians, and they were kind of the stimulus behind getting that one started, and worked with Harvey Nelson. Eventually Gordon Kerr, who was their lead Regional Director up in the Canadian Wildlife Service, talked to Harvey Nelson at some meeting and eventually they got a hold of me and wanted to know if I would co-chair that with Gordon, and I thought that was another excellent opportunity to work on another species, another group of species that needed some help. So that was kind of the start it, we held meetings, we actually ended up with three regional directors from the Canadian Wildlife Service involved at some points, and Gordon and I handled that. The Canadians had excellent staff in the research side of things and we had good staff, or excellent staff on our side too, but a lot of it was kind of slanted towards the management side of things, and it raised some interesting conflicts and discussions between the two countries, but it all worked out. Everybody dealt with it in a very professional manner and the Joint Venture eventually got started, and now we've got, I don't know what the goose problem is now, but its way bigger, we've got too many to deal with. But I don't know if that Joint Venture had anything to do with that or not, I really doubt it. Anyway, it was an excellent example of international cooperation

between the two countries, and I always thoroughly enjoyed working with the Canadians, they were always a professional bunch of folks, either at the Federal level or at the Provincial level, it was always a pleasure to work with them.

Another activity that I was involved with as regional director was the Fish and Wildlife Service Waterfowl Regulations Committee process, and I took that very seriously also, as a very important activity for a regional director to be involved in. It kind of depended on how many ducks we had to dole out; if there were a lot of ducks and good production, it was a lot easier process than the years when we had droughts and there were not many ducks to give out, and then there was a lot of conflict between the flyways and between the states within a flyway, and it got to be a very contentious and difficult process to work through. It actually was at that time a complicated process anyway, with all of the meetings and all of the activities and public hearings in Washington, D.C. It took a lot of time and a lot of effort and again, it was the staff that actually was the most important in making sure that those of us regional directors that were on those committees got the work done, and the migratory bird office and all of the field biologists and the folks that went out in the field and did the counts and came up with the information. I don't recall ever that we were seriously surprised when the forecast came out and what showed up, it was always close enough for us to come up with some realistic regulations. Some of the states and some of the folks could get pretty original or innovative in some of the things they came up with. I can remember we had the one year that I think it was the state of Colorado, but it was in the central flyway and they were talking about surplus drake mallards, and that was an interesting one that in the way we counted and (unclear), and the point system was another activity that some states used, and there was a lot of abuse, but it was another issue that came up and was discussed at the various meetings. A very politically sensitive issue, there was a lot of interest in Congress about it, and from the public frankly, and it was one of the most visible things that the Fish and Wildlife Service did, was determining the seasons and the structures and the harvest of these waterfowl species. It was another fun issue, but sometimes I didn't think it was so much fun, some of the heat that we took and some of the pressure from various folks. But it worked out very well, and I'm glad to see that the structure is still continuing to this day. I enjoyed that.

Some of the changes that took place in the Fish and Wildlife Service in the 32 years that I worked for them; one of the earlier ones was the formation of Region 6 in Denver, which was carved out of three other regions, and I was in Minneapolis at the time, and they took three of our states, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Nebraska were taken from Region 3 and became part of the new Region 6. This was kind of decided without much input from any of the regions that were affected, and then the announcement was made and then the regions did have a little opportunity, the regional directors, to discuss this, but it was pretty much decided and there wasn't a lot discussed about it. But during the time, there was probably, as I recall maybe six months from the time that it was first announced seriously that this might take place, there had been some rumors up to that time but nobody took them very seriously. It became an opportunity for the people in the various regions that were losing states to do some creative accounting to see if they could move some of the money, the operating money, from those states legally into other accounts or

move them, and to save some of their best employees, there was even a few people I think I moved in that period of time because the regions wanted to keep them and some of them didn't want to move, and there was all kinds of activity. But I can remember a lot of discussion and activities taking place, but I don't know of anything illegal that was done at the time, but I think that the loosing regions were probably successful in squeezing some money out of the loosing states and trying to protect it. I think the way the Washington office handled that though, now that I think about it, it seems to me that there was some kind of a surcharge on all of the regions after they set the new region up, and they actually took some money off the top, right at the Washington level, from the budget formation process that negatively affected some of the other regions. So I'm not sure that there was anything gained in that whole process. But it was a traumatic time for the Service. The region worked out fine and I ended up there as regional director, so it turned out to be a good thing. But at the time that it happened, it was quite an experience for people in regional offices, I'm not sure that the field people really were impacted that much, life went on in the field stations, and I'm not sure that they really were that concerned about it.

Another major change in the Fish and Wildlife Service that I noticed in all the years that I was there is that when I went to college and then graduated from the University of Minnesota, we had about 30 folks in my graduating class in Fish and Wildlife Management, there were no women. And at that time that was not unusual, and in a lot of colleges then, they were not a lot of women. When I started to work for the Fish and Wildlife Service, I don't even remember who the first woman biologist was that I ran across and where they showed up. But it was one of the major changes on the positive side that I saw take place in the Fish and Wildlife Service in 32 years, to see women end up as regional directors and in the top positions and not just as field biologists. When I started, there were very few field biologists that were women. It was a very awkward situation when the first women showed up and you had to go to meetings together, and particularly in the wildlife side, we didn't see so much of that in fish hatcheries, but in the wildlife side I can remember the guys talking about how were they going to go camping and working out in the woods and stuff and have women, and how was this going to work out. It was a traumatic time, and now it's worked out very well.

The other thing that I recall, the major changes from the early '60s up until the time I retired was the increase in rules and regulations that took place in trying to employ regulations and rules and mandates from Congress. Back in the early days, Congress, when they wanted the Fish and Wildlife Service to do something, normally provided the money to do it. In some cases they provided the money and didn't even have a mandate or good legal reason for doing it, they just provided the money and said do this. Later on, when I was regional director, Congress was getting into the habit of mandating things for the Fish and Wildlife Service to do and not providing any money. I think that has continued and that is more and more of a burden, where they just dictate that certain rules and regulations and things must be done, and there's new money. They talk about doing within the existing funding, and it's really been a burden on the agency and other federal

agencies to try to operate and continue to do the job they are supposed to do in the face of some of these mandates and the inadequate funding.

DICTATION ENDS

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